SEEDS FOR THE WORLD

VERMONT BEAN SEED COMPANY

The Vermont Bean Seed Guide to

Preparing & Cooking Chinese & Japanese Vegetables & Greens

Why don't more gardeners grow Oriental vegetables?

We think one reason may be that, although the vegetables are beautiful to see, the cook isn't quite sure how to prepare them. Stir-frying is always an option, and true enough, many Oriental restaurants serve them this way.

On our buying trip to the Orient we had the opportunity to sample some of the many tasty dishes prepared with Oriental vegetables and greens. And now we'd like to share some of these recipes with you.

Be adventurous! Grow all types and cook them in these special ways.

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Rolled Souffle with Chicken and Mushro

Filling

3 1/2 tablespoons butter
6 mushrooms, thinly sliced
3 whole scallions, thinly sliced
3/4 pound (2 small plants) Chinese cabbage
1 teaspoon chopped fresh basil or 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1 1/2 tablespoons whole wheat pastry flour
2/3 cup milk or chicken stock
1/2 cup chopped cooked chicken meat
1/2 cup shredded Swiss cheese
1/2 teaspoon soy sauce
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Souffle

4 eggs, separated
1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Filling

Cut the ribs from the cabbage leaves. Dice the ribs, but keep the leaves whole.

In a 2-quart saucepan, saute the mushrooms, scallions, and cabbage ribs in 2 tablespoons of the butter until tender. Add basil and cook 1 more minute. Reserve mixture.

Melt the remaining butter in a 1-quart saucepan over low heat. Stir in the flour and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Slowly add the milk (or chicken stock) while stirring with a wire whisk. When the sauce begins to bubble slowly, remove 3 tablespoons and reserve for the souffle. Combine the remaining sauce with the chicken, Swiss cheese, soy sauce, nutmeg, pepper, and the reserved vegetables. Keep the filling warm while preparing the souffle.

Souffle

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Thoroughly butter and flour a dark steel cookie sheet (10" x 16"). Stainless steel or thin aluminum will cause sticking.

Cook cabbage leaves in a covered pan just until wilted. Squeeze out all excess liquid from leaves and chop finely. Mix cabbage and reserve sauce in a bowl and stir in egg yolks, 1 at a time, mixing well after each addition.

In a separate bowl beat egg whites and cream of tartar until soft peaks form. Fold the whites thoroughly but gently into the greens.

Spread this mixture evenly on the cookie sheet with a rubber spatula. Sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese and bake for about 15 minutes or until the top is lightly browned. Loosen soufflé with a metal spatula. Turn the whole pan upside-down onto a sheet of waxed paper.

Spread the warm filling evenly over the soufflé. Fold lengthwise with the help of the waxed paper. Place the roll on a hot serving plate and cut into 4-inch slices. Serve hot.

Yield: 4 servings

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Mustard Green Vinegar

Mustard vinegar can be used with vegetable oil to make salad dressings. Add a touch of honey and some sweet onions to the vinegar and use it to make cucumber salad. The mustard vinegar can be used to replace the lemon juice in making hollandaise sauce.

3 or 4 large mustard green leaves, heavy ribs removed
2 garlic cloves
3/4 cup rice vinegar or plain white vinegar

Mince the mustard leaves and garlic together.

Transfer the garlic-mustard mixture to a pint jar. Pour in vinegar and refrigerate for at least 1 day before using.

Yield: 1 cup

Mustard Butter

Serve a pat of this butter with cooked vegetables, fish, or broiled meats. The lemon juice can be omitted to make an extra special garlic bread. Adding a vegetable to garlic bread gives it a bit of nutritionally redeeming value, and in this case, an intriguing flavor.

For a very fancy presentation, the softened mustard butter can be made into rosettes with a pastry bag with a star tip. Form on a baking sheet lined with waxed paper, and refrigerate. Serve by placing a pat or rosette on each portion of fish, meat or vegetable.

To make garlic bread, slice a small loaf of French or Italian bread into thick slices, leaving bottom connected. Spread each slice with a thick layer of mustard butter. Wrap the loaf with foil, leaving a vent in the top. Bake 15 minutes at 375°F. until steamy hot.

1/2 cup very finely chopped mustard green leaves
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 large garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon lemon juice

In a small bowl, combine mustard, butter, garlic and lemon until well blended. Chill until ready to use.

Yield: 3/4 cup (as a topping for vegetables or meats, use about 1 tablespoon per serving; garlic bread uses 2 to 3 teaspoons per slice)

Green Cabbage Stuffed Bread

A Russian filled bread, like a pie with a raised dough crust. Excellent to serve with soup.

Bread Dough

1 1/2 teaspoons dry yeast
2 tablespoons warm water
3 1/2 teaspoons honey
1/2 cup milk
1/4 cup butter
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon caraway seeds
1/2 cup rye flour
1 3/4 cups whole wheat bread flour

Filling

2 tablespoons butter
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1/2 pound or (3 1/2 cups) finely chopped heading Chinese cabbage, including ribs
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 cup creamed cottage cheese
1 egg, beaten

Bread Dough

Dissolve the yeast in the water. Add 1/2 teaspoon of honey, stir, and set aside until it begins to bubble.

Warm the milk and melt the butter in it. Set aside to cool. Beat the egg and 1 tablespoon of honey in a large bowl. Stir in the milk and yeast mixtures.

Add the caraway seeds and rye flour and mix them well into the liquid. Then gradually mix in the whole wheat flour, kneading briefly. Although the dough might still be a little sticky, don't add any more flour.

Place dough in an oiled bowl and flip so that oiled side is up. Let it rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk (about 45 minutes).

Filling

Meanwhile, prepare the filling. Saute onion in butter for about 3 minutes. Add the cabbage and continue to saute until wilted and tender but not browned. Add dill and pepper. Remove from heat and stir in the cheese and egg. Set aside.

Punch down the dough and knead well for 5 to 10 minutes. Set to rise a second time until doubled in bulk again. Punch down dough, knead briefly, and divide into 2 equal parts.

Assembly

Butter a 10-inch pie pan. Press or roll out part of the dough so that it fits the bottom of the pie pan and just starts to come up the sides. Spread filling over the bottom, leaving 1/2-inch space at the edge.

Roll out the remaining dough and fit it over the top of the filling. Press the two layers of dough together around the edges. Prick the top with a fork to allow steam to escape. Set to rise until doubled.

Bake at 350°F. for 20 minutes. Brush with butter if desired. Serve warm or cold.

Yield: 8 servings

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Vermont Bean Seed Company's Traditional Stir-Fry

A wok is good to have for stir-frying, otherwise a heavy skillet will work, also. Any of the Asian brassicas (Chinese Cabbage, Green Rocket, and Pak Choy) may be stir-fried with water chestnuts, ginger root, radishes, and mushrooms.

Chop leaves and stems (Pak Choy) on the diagonal into bite-size pieces. Chop 1 ONION and saute in small amount of OIL with SLICE OF GINGER ROOT. Stir-fry cabbage briefly in this mixture, add SOY SAUCE to taste and 1/2 TABLESPOON HONEY. Serve with brown rice.

Shrimp Stir-Fry Cabbage

From the Rodale Test Kitchen

Marinade

2 tablespoons rice vinegar
2 teaspoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons cornstarch
2 teaspoons tomato paste
2 tablespoons water
1 pound raw shrimp, cleaned
1 1/2 pounds (2 large heads) Pak Choy

Sauce

1/2 cup stock
2 teaspoons cornstarch
2 teaspoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons honey
1/4 cup safflower or peanut oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/4-inch slice of ginger, minced
8 mushrooms, quartered
4 whole scallions, thinly sliced (keep green part separate)
1/4 pound (4 cups) Japanese green or spinach, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
3 cups hot cooked rice

Mix the marinade ingredients together. Add shrimp and stir to coat the pieces well. Refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours.

Trim the cabbage leaves from the ribs. Slice the ribs diagonally into 1/2-inch wide pieces. Cut the leaves into 2-inch squares.

Mix the sauce ingredients together and drain the marinade from the shrimp into this sauce.

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in the wok over high heat. A small piece of scallion dropped in the oil dances around when the oil is ready. Saute half of the shrimp until they turn pink. Remove to a bowl. Repeat with the remaining shrimp. Add shrimp and any liquid to the bowl.

Heat the remaining oil. Saute the garlic and ginger briefly, then add the mushrooms, white part of scallions, and cabbage ribs. Stir 1 minute and add the spinach and cabbage leaves. Stir constantly until the greens are wilted. Pour in the sauce, lower heat and stir until thickened. Return shrimp to the wok and cook until warmed (about 1 minute). Garnish with the green scallion.

Yield: 4 servings

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Sweet Cabbage and Walnut Dressing

This dressing has a deep green color and should be served over cooked, chilled vegetables that will contrast with the color of the dressing.

1 cup firmly packed heading Chinese Cabbage
3/4 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 cup coarsely chopped walnuts

Process the cabbage, olive oil, lemon juice, and garlic in a blender until smooth. Add the walnuts and process off and on, just until crunchy.

Refrigerate before serving.

Serve over chilled, steamed cauliflower.

Yield: 1 1/2 cups

Shungiku or Garland Chrysanthemum

Japanese and Chinese cooks use the Shungiku, or Garland (edible chrysanthemum), in chop suey and sukiyaki. Harvest the leaves and flowers when flowers are at the bud stage for best flavor.

The flowers and leaves can be served raw in salads or as tomato garnishes.

The leaves can be steamed like spinach and served with butter. Or the leaves and flowers can be stir-fried in a wok or frying pan with a small amount of oil and chopped onion, and added with any of the traditional chop suey or sukiyaki ingredients such as bean sprouts, fish/chicken/shrimp, water chestnuts, red peppers, oriental (shiitake) mushrooms, ginger root, and other Asian vegetables.

Turnip or Mustard Greens

In the days when Chaucer's ***Canterbury Tales*** *celebrated the advent of Spring (and the first tender greens), there was no way to preserve food except through salting and possibly a few esoteric herbal means. A few things could be dried unsalted. It's a wonder those medieval folks made it through the long dark winters - of course, many didn't. "Greens" have always represented new life -unfortunately, it seems that they have fallen from grace or are unknown on any but the dinner tables of Dixie. Southern growers know that turnip and mustard greens need sweet soil (alkaline) and cool temperatures. For exclusive greens harvesting, try our Seven Top Turnips and Florida Broadleaf Mustard - best flavor and highly resistant to everything. Grow them Spring and Fall.*

Go out in the late afternoon or early morning to harvest the greens. No need to pull up the entire plant: gently break or cut outside and inside leaves but leave several leaves on the plant. You'll need quite a few leaves to make a dish for two or more people. This cooking method works for fresh and frozen uses.

Fill a clean sink with cold water and give the greens a good dip but no soaking. Wash them under running water after their cold water dip. Tear the leaves into pieces or chop, as you prefer. Place these into a heavy pot (best not to use aluminum). Place a small amount of water in the pot - not enough to cover the greens, because they'll cook down. Sprinkle some dry or prepared Italian dressing over the greens. Cook the greens over medium heat until the water gets very hot, but before boiling, then reduce to simmer until the greens turn dark. Then they're ready.

The cooking water is powerfully rich in vitamins so you may want to serve the greens with the liquid in a deep dish or bowl. Salt to taste. Cooled, the greens and liquid can be frozen with no loss of texture or vitamin integrity.

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